

To the Sunriver Owners Association Board of Directors:

Fall is a perfect time to appreciate the wonder and beauty of Sunriver's many deciduous trees and native plants. The Aspen are bright jewels of yellow against the dark green of Lodgepoles and Ponderosas while Vine Maples provide dramatic reds and oranges to the otherwise muted Sunriver landscape. Many of the trees and plants we enjoy today were very likely provided some protection from deer predation and other threats to their survival. Should the extreme prohibition of plant protections proposed by the Design Committee be enacted as-is, I don't believe it's a stretch to suggest that future generations will not enjoy the same viewscape we enjoy today.

I urge you to reconsider the plant protection rules as proposed by the Design Committee. The proposed rules are unnecessarily limiting and do not provide homeowners with sufficient leeway to protect native trees. Further, the proposed rules outlaw *all* protection of native shrubs and wildflowers. As the saying goes, "the best time to plant a tree is 25 years ago, the second-best time is today". Rules for protecting trees and other native plants should take that truism into account. We are fortunate that many Sunriver homeowners planted trees and shrubs years ago, prior to the current effort to hamper such efforts.

Young trees and plants are particularly susceptible to fatal predation by deer, as well as the extremes of Sunriver's climate. Homeowners should be allowed to provide sufficient protection to native plants and trees they have purchased and nurtured. Further, native trees are not always single-trunk trees. They often grow in multi-trunk clusters. The same is true for native Serviceberry, Chokecherry and Currants. These are plants *native* to this area and are not exotics that require irrigation for survival. Such trees and plants can be found on any walk in the nearby forest and should not only be allowed but encouraged in Sunriver.

As Aspen mature, the bark on their trunks remains very soft. A single deer removing the "velvet" from their antlers can kill a young, or even a mature, tree. Of course, we're all aware of the damage beavers and porcupines can do well into a tree's lifespan. The proposed regulations are not sufficient to address the many long-term needs of trees and plants.

Native trees and plants provide food and shelter for birds and other wildlife and soften and enhance the landscape spring through fall. As such, efforts to plant and propagate native plants and trees should be given priority in any new design rules. At the last Board meeting, the Design committee representative admitted that the committee simply threw up their hands saying it was "too difficult" to address shrubs and wildflowers. That is not an acceptable response from a committee tasked with an

assignment, and I hope the Board will not accept that as a rational basis to prohibit reasonable protections.

The Design Committee proposed a strange requirement that any protective fencing be either black or galvanized metal. This requirement is another example of the extreme overreach by the committee. Currently, many homeowners have purchased and placed green welded-wire fencing, or other unobtrusive protections around trees and other plants. There are many viable tree trunk protections that are far less noticeable than either black or galvanized fencing material. This requirement will force homeowners to purchase new material and is greatly dismissive of homeowners' time and expense. Please reject this unnecessarily burdensome requirement.

Lastly, I'd like to mention that I've witnessed the SROA Board be extremely supportive of various homeowners' interests – from expanding pickle ball courts, building a beautiful owners' pool facility, exploring a Sunriver dog park and now even considering construction of covered tennis courts. For reasons I don't understand, the Board's concern for owner's desire for native plant protections has ranged from disinterest to outright hostility. Sunriver homeowners that wish to nurture native plantings are not "renegades" whose actions need to be reined in. Sunriver is large enough, and homeowners diverse enough, that I would think a Board representing ALL Sunriver homeowners would be able to find a more accommodating protection plan than the overly rigid one proposed by the Design Committee.

Thank you,

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